Government Documents
BRA
2509

PRESERVING ROXBURY'S HERITAGE

"Historical analysis is one of several resources that can contribute to our community's development. The identification of ourselves as a people in time is the major ideological goal of the Museum of Afro American History. The sign welcoming visitors to our temporary gallery reads: 'For this museum, history means people and events through time. We do not know where we are if we cannot remember where we have been; we can't make informed decisions about where to go if we can't recognize where we are and where we've been. History is time past, present, and future.'"

Byron Rushing, President
The Museum of Afro-American History

I. The Resources

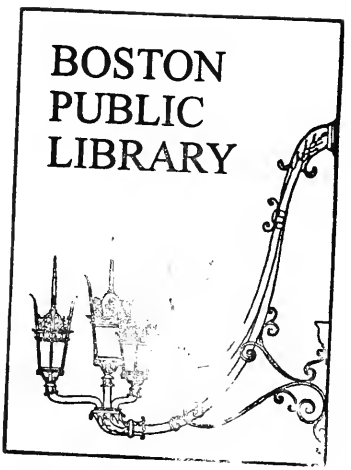
Summary of Significance

Roxbury is significant for its military importance during the American Revolution, as an important example of a Boston "streetcar suburb" which experienced the transformation from rural farming communit to fashionable suburb to a twentieth century urban neighborhood, and as the center, for almost 50/30 years, of the Black community in Boston.

Roxbury's historic resources reflect these varied roles as well as its associations with persons of regional and national importance, including the Dudley family, John Eliot, Edward Everett Hale, William Lloyd Garrison, and Louis Prang, Wendell Phillips, Frederick Douglass, and more recently Otto and Muriel Snowden and Elma Lewis. They are varied resources, including a cross section of residential structures dating from the mid-eighteenth through the early twentieth centuries, an ancient burying ground, industrial and institutional buildings from the Victorian era, as well as archaeological sites of exceptional value. To understand these resources in context takes a leap back in time to the earliest settlement of the town.

Early Layout and Political Framework

The town of Roxbury was one of the six villages founded in 1630 by the Massachusetts Bay Company. Among the Puritan immigrants who sailed with John Winthrop from England aboard the Arbella in April, 1630, [illegible] William Pynchon, leader of a small group that settled just south of the Shawmut Peninsula. The settlement was called "Rocksbury" or "Roxburie," in recognition of the area's uneven, rocky terrain with its brooks, ponds, springs, and wooded hills. Early settlement clustered around the meetinghouse in John Eliot Square, constructed in 1632. The boundaries of the town were defined by a series of legislative acts dating as early as 1636 and as late as 1850. Farming remained the main occupation throughout the colonial period, with industry limited to such farm-related activities as grist mills, fulling mills, and tanneries. Roxbury was incorporated as a city in 1846 and was annexed to Boston in 1868, following West Roxbury's separation as an independent town in 1851. Annexation accelerated expansion of an urban transit system and accompanying residential development.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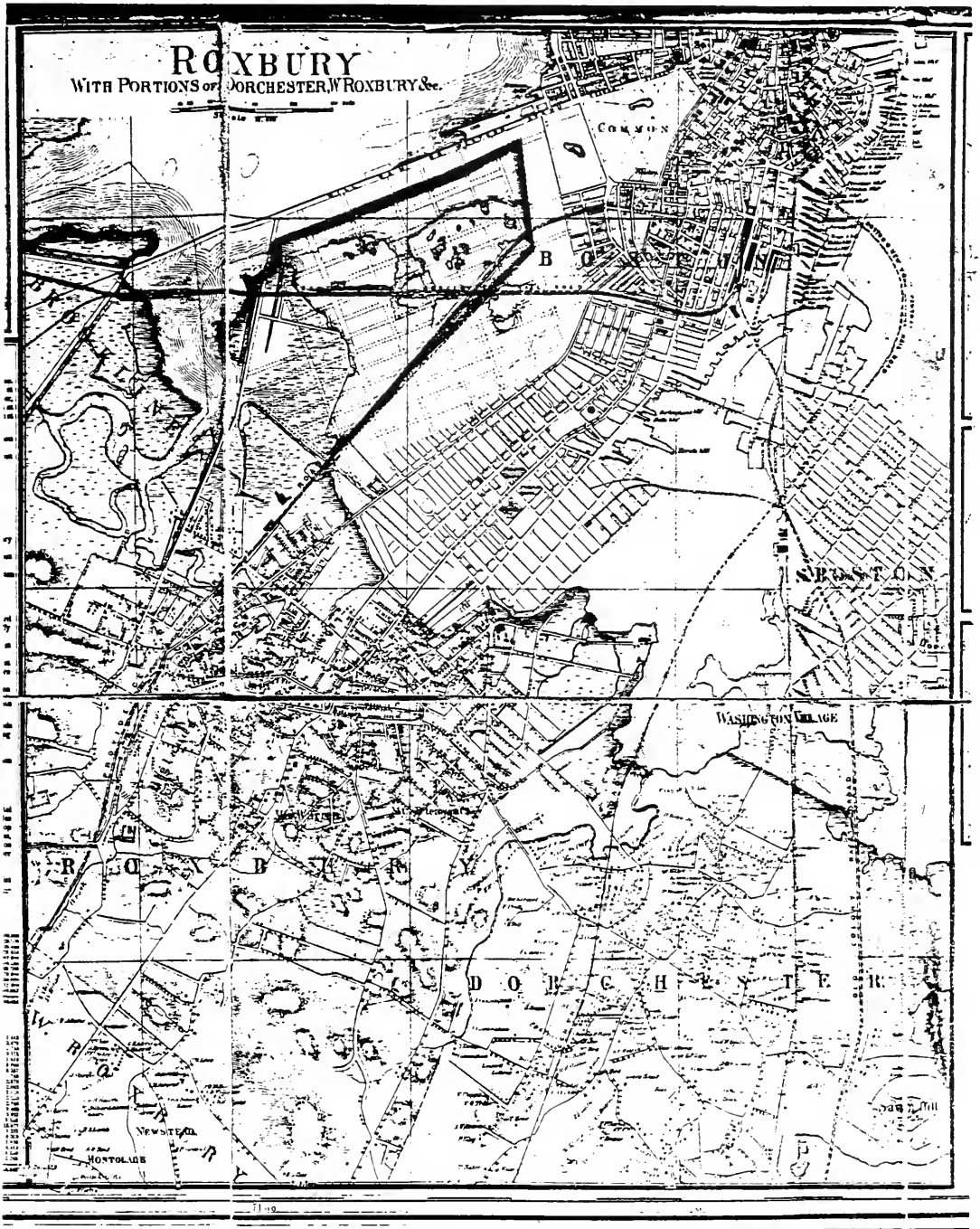

Map of Roxbury, 1850s.

Rural Layout and Landuse

As the last town on the mainland before crossing the neck to Boston on the Shawmut Peninsula, Roxbury occupied an important economic position. Roads gathered to go down the Neck at the lower Roxbury village, which became a market town for produce and goods enroute to Boston. Thus, the only road from Boston passed through Roxbury, dividing at John Eliot Square into the road to Brookline and Cambridge (Roxbury and Tremont Sts.) and the road to Dedham (Centre St.). Houses clustered around the town green at Eliot Square and along Dudley and Washington Sts. The Norfolk House (c. 1870; 4-20 John Eliot Square) stands on the site of an earlier frame hostelry, evidence of Roxbury's importance in the inland transportation system. The original building was demolished in 1853 to make way for the present massive building. Fertile farmland covered the slopes of Roxbury Highlands, fed by streams joining the Stoney Brook. As Boston emerged as a city, it formed distinctive social and economic districts. [Roxbury Neck, now Lower Roxbury, was a social and economic fringe district crowded with wharves, shipyards, and lodging houses, while the Highlands remained agricultural land.]

Revolution

As tension with the British increased, Roxbury Highlands, with its commanding height overlooking the land connection to Boston along Washington St., became of strategic military importance. The availability of local puddingstone to construct forts was a decided advantage, as well. In the summer of 1775, two forts were built as part of a ring of defenses that ultimately resulted in the evacuation of the British from Boston. The Lower Fort, comprising two acres of land between Cedar, Highland, and Linwood Sts., had steep walls and a bastion at each angle. The slope rising gently south of Eliot Square provided a good view of the Neck. The High Fort, today Highland Park, occupied the summit of the hill and was an earthworks fortification with corner bastions. The Lower Fort is now completely built over, while the High Fort survived until construction of the Cochituate Waterworks Standpipe in 1869 to designs by landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted. Most of the buildings in John Eliot Square were destroyed during the fighting. The Dillaway-Thomas House at 183 Roxbury St. (c.1750; John Eliot Square District, National Register 1973) is the only surviving pre-Revolutionary structure in the district.

Summary of Residential Change in 19th Century

Roxbury Highlands and the Moreland Street Districts exist as important examples of Boston's "streetcar suburb" development from early farming communities to fashionable nineteenth-century suburbs and finally to twentieth-century urban neighborhoods. Proximity to Boston and periodic transportation improvements strongly influenced this evolution during the nineteenth century. Beginning as pastureland for houses along the gentle slopes of the hilly lands, the area was then identified by a few large estates that were broken into smaller estates and further subdivided into various-sized lots. Although there were areas of moderate density from the beginning of the nineteenth century, the urban character began to manifest itself in earnest by 1868 with the introduction of brick row houses into neighborhoods of single and double frame houses. Row housing had, for the most part, disappeared by 1880, to be replaced by triple deckers and two

family houses in the 1880s and 1890s and by apartment buildings at the turn of the century. Fortunately for the coherence of the community, the overall scale of residences was preserved. It is often difficult to distinguish between row houses, apartment buildings and double houses and between single and two family houses.

Beginnings of Rural Change

The rural character of Roxbury began to change in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, when land was filled in along the tidal marshes of the Neck and turnpike routes and omnibus service brought people to Roxbury. Many of the buildings from this period were clustered in Eliot Square. The present First Church, Unitarian, built in 1804 on the site of four previous meetinghouses, is an excellent example of the Federal meetinghouse style and the oldest extant frame church in the city. Two other buildings still standing are Ionic Hall (c. 1803; 149 Roxbury St.), originally a mansion and now the rectory for St. John's Episcopal Church, and the Spooner-Lambert house (c. 1780; 64 Bartlett St.). All three are part of the John Eliot Square District (NR 1973). Other early buildings in Eliot Square have been replaced over the years by newer structures.

Estate Development

Early suburbanization in Roxbury Highlands occurred in 1825, when five Boston merchants (the "five associates")--Benjamin F. Copeland, David A. and Thomas Simmons, Supply Clapp Thwing, and Charles Hickling--bought a 26-acre parcel including the site of the High Fort, laid out Highland St. and Fort Ave. divided the land among themselves. The purpose of the association was to create a pleasant residential community and to preserve and embellish the fort. Several houses were built, one of which (140 Highland St.) still survives as a reminder of the semi-rural character of the area at the time. Only scattered building occurred on Highland St. until the mid 1830s, when purchasers of large lots began to build handsome residences in the current fashionable architectural styles. The Hales map of 1832 shows Highland St. with four houses along it but no other streets except Centre St. and the cluster around Eliot Square; Fort Ave., though laid out in 1825, was apparently not developed immediately.

The extension of Tremont St. through Roxbury as a free road in 1832 and the arrival of the Boston and Providence Railroad in 1834 drew a population of wealthy estate builders and upper middle class businessmen to the Highlands. In 1856 the Metropolitan Horse Railway tied the area to downtown Boston via service along Tremont and Washington Sts., bringing an influx of middle class commuters, as well. The pattern of development during this period consisted of a gradual selling off of individual lots on which detached single or double houses were built, either by the original developer, by a builder on speculation, or by the new owner for his personal use.

In 1835 Alvah Kittredge purchased several large parcels of land, one of which included both sides of Cedar St. from Centre to Washington. The following year he built his columned Greek Revival mansion on the old Lower Fort site on Highland St. between Linwood (yet to be laid out) and Cedar. The house survives at 10 Linwood St., moved from its original position and hemmed

in by later buildings. Kittredge, who donated Cedar Square to the town in 1851, was responsible for developing much of the Highlands area in the years from 1835 until he sold his mansion in 1866.

Building Styles in Estate Development Period

Until about 1870, single and double houses, nearly all of frame construction, were the only types built. Their size and elaboration varied, and small and large houses were often built in close proximity, although the mansions were generally located on the largest or highest pieces of land. The single family houses reflected the predominantly anti-urban sentiment of the populace at this time, prompted by the ill effects of industrialization and immigration. Whether cottages or mansions built for the upper middle class or more modest dwellings, they usually had varying degrees of Italianate detail and/or classical ornament, reflecting a strong, local classical tradition. All the mid nineteenth-century styles are represented--Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Italianate, Mansard, Queen Ann, Shingle, and Stick style. A particularly elaborate and well-preserved example from the end of the period is the mansard-roofed Stick Style house at 174 Highland St. (c.1870). The double house, in contrast, was less definitively suburban in form, perhaps anticipating the denser urban-type building period to come. Double houses, in which the living space was divided vertically, varied in appearance from the urban look of the brick ones, strongly resembling row houses, to the more suburban looking frame ones.

Industrial Development

While the arrival of the Boston and Providence Railroad brought the wealthy leisured class and businessmen to the Highlands, it attracted an early immigrant population to Lower Roxbury. Manufacturing and commercial establishments developed along the rail corridor on pre-Revolutionary farmland. The lower middle class housing that abounded here by the 1850s and 1860s sheltered workers in a wide range of industries, including textile mills, foundaries, rope walks, lumber and stone yards, shoe factories, machine shops, and breweries. Isolated by virtue of its topography, the Highlands area was too steep for industry, with the exception of the Louis Prang Chromolithograph Co., located at the corner of Roxbury and Gardner Sts. beginning in 1867. One of the most prominent American businesses of its type, rivalling the presently better known Currier and Ives, it produced not only chromolithographs, but drawing books for public schools and some of the first American greeting cards. Aside from worker housing near Prang's factory, the western Roxbury uplands, and an adjacent area between Columbus Ave. and Washington St. (Marcella St. area), the lower middle class population was concentrated in the lowlands.

Streetcar Suburbs

Annexation to Boston in 1868 triggered the first wave of heavy suburbanization in the Highland Park area. The construction of the High Victorian Cochituate standpipe in 1869 as part of the city water system perhaps symbolized Roxbury's hopes for better public services. By the time of the 1873 Hopkins atlas, nearly every street now present was in place, but development had begun to take a different form through the introduction of row housing. Suburban in location but urban in design, row housing reflected a

less clear-cut rural ideal than previous single family house development. Row houses were popular among a middle and upper middle class aspiring to the social status of wealthy urban dwellers. Recognizing the appear of this house type, developers in Roxbury Highlands built suburban row housing in blocks and then sold it off house by house; this was unlike the Back Bay, where most row houses were built to the requirements of individual owners. The existence of isolated rows, stripped of their traditional urban context, is proof of the conscious effort among developers and owners alike to emulate an urban lifestyle. Some rows were elaborate, such as the marble-faced block at 28-46 Cedar St. (c. 1870) or the brownstone block at 15-27 Highland Ave. (c.1873). Most Highlands rows were built of red brick, such as those on Fort Ave., Morley St., or 5-8 Kittredge Park.

Persons

It was at this time that some locally- and nationally-known residents acquired property in Roxbury Highlands. William Lloyd Garrison purchased 125 Highland St in 1864, ten years after its construction. Edward Everett Hale lived in the Goddard mansion (12 Morley St.) from 1869 to 1899. Nathaniel J. Bradlee bought the last of the great estates in the Kittredge Square area, Kittredge's own mansion, in 1871.

Cultural Institutions

This period was also one of developing cultural institutions in Roxbury Highlands, one of the most important being the Fellowes Athenaeum on Millmont St. at the corner of Lambert Ave. Built in 1872 to designs by Nathaniel J. Bradlee, it was supported by men such as Charles K. Dillaway, the prominent educator who lived on Eliot Square, and served as a branch of the Boston Public Library for a time. Also built at this time was the Dudley School (c.1874; now demolished) at the corner of Dudley and Putnam Sts. on the site of the former Roxbury Town House. Within sight of it was the curved, brownstone-fronted Cox Building (c.1870) at Dudley and Bartlett Sts., which is currently undergoing renovation.

Late 19th Century Residential Changes

The Depression of 1873 halted building activity nearly everywhere, and Roxbury was no exception. Despite a 12-year slack period, transportation expansion continued, triggering a period of rapid building in the improved economy of the 1880s and 1890s along commuter lines. Electric streetcar service in 1889 and the rapid transit service in 1901 accelerated this suburban development, offering all classes the opportunity to escape the congestion of the central city. Multiple-family housing types emerged at this time, as well as continuing single family development. The first and grandest apartment house in the area was the five-story brick building at 68-70 Bartlett St., since demolished. Known as the Hotel Eliot, it was designed by J.H. Besarick and built in 1875. So outstanding was its design that it merited publication in the American Architect and Building News (v. 2, no. 55, January 13, 1877).

Subsequent multiple-family housing in the area was more modest. The triple deckers and two family houses built during this period and into the twentieth century signal the emergence of Roxbury as a modern suburb, in which

residential and commercial areas are segregated. They were built to house a middle class that required the accessibility to downtown Boston businesses but could not afford to build a single-family house on the costly lots. Since height restrictions made it difficult to build the increasingly popular apartment building in the suburbs, other housing solutions were necessary for people who wanted a horizontal living arrangement. The two-family house was one solution to this problem. Its resemblance to single-family houses suggests the social aspirations of the middle class; many of the older two-family dwellings in Roxbury were probably designed for a single family.

Triple Deckers

The limited units of the two-family house could not accommodate the great influx of immigrants. The triple decker is the suburban version, on a detached house streetscape, of the apartment building. Double triple deckers, in particular, strongly resemble apartment buildings. Pattern books for triple deckers, such as the 1908 Architects and Builders Magazine, reveal a hierarchy of costs and quality. Thus, while its form resembles the tenement and row house, the design and style of many triple deckers copy upper middle class houses of the period, with their Queen Anne and Colonial Revival detail. Examples range from the elaborate (101, 103 Highland St.) to the conventional (188-196 Highland St.). Built when most of Moreland St. and Roxbury Highlands were already developed, many triple deckers and two-family houses filled in previously unbuildable land or vacant lots, hemming in or hiding older mansions and cottages.

Residential development in Lower Roxbury, around Douglass Square, includes brick row houses constructed as working class housing by Robert Treat Paine between 1886 & 1890, and remains as an important, intact cluster of such charitable housing.

The most intense and most urban development in Roxbury occurred at the turn of the century, when multi-storied apartment buildings were constructed to accommodate the influx of immigrants, many of them Jewish. The apartment building became a popular living arrangement for the upper middle class in the late nineteenth century; after 1900, they were built to house the middle class, as well. Many contain ground-floor commercial space, evidence of the density of building at this time. Whether called "family hotels," "French flats," or "apartments," they provided a single residence on all or part of one floor, instead of several, as in the row house. Their frequent resemblance to row houses indicates the desire to duplicate the three- to four-story, single-family town houses of the upper middle class.

20th Century Changes

Through most of the twentieth century, Roxbury has experienced a gradual decrease in housing and population density, as vacant or unmaintainable buildings have been demolished. The reasons for this situation are linked to the lessening of the neighborhood as a desirable place to live, despite its architectural and environmental assets. This can be traced to a developmental pattern that began in the nineteenth century, when fast, efficient streetcar service from Boston opened up outlying regions for settlement. The coming of the automobile in the twentieth century dramatically increased the commuting range. As upper income groups moved elsewhere, their places were taken by a

low income population that could neither afford new housing, nor maintain the older structures. Structures were subdivided to make rent bills affordable. This change was out of keeping with the layout and facilities of the old suburb. For example, the small parks that were sufficient for a wealthy population with large private lots were too small and of inappropriate design and location for their new users.

In the 1970s, the Prang Lithograph Factory was converted to moderate income housing, and in 1980, Marcus Garvey Gardens, an elderly housing apartment building developed by the Roxbury Action Program, was erected at the corner of Highland St. and John Eliot Square. Today, a neighborhood preservation movement is gaining momentum, through a combination of public and private rehabilitation efforts.

Ethnic Changes

Throughout its history, Roxbury Highlands has been home to people from a variety of ethnic backgrounds engaged in a wide range of occupations. Wealthy merchants, attorneys, military leaders, clergy, housewrights and carpenters, architects, and industrialists have formed a fascinating social mix. Industrialization in the nineteenth century brought in working class Euro-Americans from Ireland, Germany, Russia, and Canada to mix with the residents of English descent who had occupied the area since the 17th century. Late nineteenth-century suburban development was dominated by the Yankee Protestant middle class, while the early twentieth-century witnessed the influx of a middle class Jewish population and both working-class and middle-class Afro-Americans in mid century. Most recently, French- and Spanish-speaking Afro-Americans from the Caribbean have joined the Highlands neighborhood. Some individuals stand out for their national, regional, or local contributions.

Important Individuals

Of Roxbury's earliest settlers, John Eliot and the Dudley family are notable. John Eliot, pastor of the First Church from 1641 until his death in 1690, was a dedicated missionary to the Indians and founder of the Roxbury Latin School. He devoted much time to translating the Bible into the Indian tongue, as well as administering to his parishioners. Important in the history of the region and the community was the Dudley family, whose patriarch, Thomas Dudley, was one of the first settlers of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. He became one of Roxbury's largest landholders while serving as Governor and Deputy Governor of the colony during much of his active life (1634-53). Other Dudleys were also visible figures in military, political, and civil affairs. The mansion at 167 Centre St., built in the late 1820s by Governor Dudley for his son David, survives as a reminder of this important Massachusetts family.

Edward Everett Hale (1822-1909), Unitarian clergyman, humanitarian reformer, and author of the short story "Man without a Country" (1863), lived in the mansion that is now 12 Morley St. from 1869-1909. William Lloyd Garrison, the great reformer and promoter of human rights, lived at 125 Highland St. from 1864 until his death in 1879. His anti-slavery newspaper, The Liberator, published from 1831-1865, aroused the nation as few other newspapers have. Garrison also promoted liberal religious views that rejected a dogmatic approach to Christianity.

Louis Prang, whose chromolithograph company was one of the most prominent American businesses of its type, moved his business and residence from Boston to Roxbury Highlands in 1867. His home at 47 Centre St. is an important example of a nineteenth-century industrial planning concept that placed the industrial magnate's house in close proximity to his business.

EXAMPLES OF BOSTON'S LESSER KNOWN
INDIVIDUAL RESOURCES & DISTRICTS IN ROXBURY

Charles St. African Methodist Episcopal Church (551 Warren St.), originally the All Souls Unitarian Church, was erected in 1888-9 and designed by Boston architect J. Williams Beal. It became the home of the present congregation in 1939. At a previous location on Anderson Street, the congregation's services had been the scene of many abolitionist meetings where William Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, Frederick Douglass, and others led the fight against slavery.

The Dudley Mansion, 167 Centre St. (determined National Register eligible). This early Federal era mansion was built in the late 1820s for David Dudley and overlooked the Stoney Brook Valley. Hannah Dudley, David's widow, occupied the house until her death in 1886. Although the large estate was subdivided, a daughter, Abbey Weld Dudley, inherited the house, where she lived until her death in 1896. The next owner, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese, used the house as a rectory for the All Saints Church in 1897. Substantial remodelling occurred at this time, including a third story and new hip roof, a semi-circular columned entry porch, and some changes in detail. Twentieth-century alterations include aluminum siding.

Eustis St. Burying Ground (corner Eustis and Washington Streets). In use from 1633 until the late nineteenth century, the burying ground contains the Parish Tomb for the ministers of the First Church in Roxbury and the graves of Warrens, Dudleys, and other prominent families.

Fellowes Athenaeum at 46 Millmont St. on the corner of Lambert Ave (c. 1873). Founded with a bequest by Caleb Fellowes at the instigation of his friend Supply Clapp Thwing, this large, classically-detailed building is in the same stylistic tradition as the Boston Public Library and the Boston Athenaeum. Typical of the cultural and charitable institutions developed by Roxbury inhabitants in the nineteenth century, it served as a branch of the Boston Public Library and presently as the Refuge Church of Christ.

The New England Hospital for Women and Children (41 & 55 Dimock St.) is significant for its role in the history of women in medicine as well as for its architecture, serving for over a century as both a teaching and a practicing hospital. The facility was incorporated as the New England Hospital for Women and Children in 1863, founded in order to provide women with medical care by competent physicians of their own sex and to educate women in the study and practice of medicine. As such, it was one of the first hospitals of its kind in America. The eight buildings, constructed from 1873 to 1930, exemplify the corresponding changes in architectural tastes from the Stick Style and High Victorian Gothic through the Classical and Georgian Revivals, and include works by prominent Boston architects.

William Lloyd Garrison House (125 Highland St.; National Historic Landmark) served as the home of the noted abolitionist leader and editor of the Liberator from 1864 to 1879.

Edward Everett Hale House (12 Morley St.; National Register) is an outstanding large frame Greek Revival residence, built around 1841, and was the home of Edward Everett Hale, noted Unitarian clergyman and humanitarian reformer, from 1869 to 1909.

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Highland Park & Roxbury High Fort (Beech Glen and Fort Ave.; National Register) is the site of the Cochituate Water System's 1869 Victorian standpipe mounted on an earthen platform which marks the area of the Revolutionary War period Roxbury High Fort.

Alvah Kittredge House (12 Linwood St.; National Register) is a handsome large frame Greek Revival mansion built in 1836 for merchant Alvah Kittredge, and was later the home of noted 19th century architect Nathaniel J. Bradlee.

The Louis Prang Lithograph Factory, 296 Roxbury St., at the corner of Roxbury and Gardner Sts. (1867). Rebuilt in 1878 after a fire, an addition nearly doubled its size in 1881. Prang, a German immigrant, started his business in Boston in 1856. He is famous as the producer of chromolithographs that rivalled those of Currier and Ives, as well as drawing books for public schools and some of the first American greeting cards. Now recycled as housing, this is an important remnant of the former thriving industries in the Stoney Brook Valley, itself transformed into the broad southwest corridor roadway.

Shirley-Eustis House (31-37 Shirley St.; National Register) was constructed around 1747 by William Shirley, Royal Governor of Massachusetts Bay from 1741 to 1756, and later owned by William Eustis, Massachusetts Governor from 1823 to 1825. It is an outstanding example of Georgian architecture, and a rare survivor from its period.

Frederick Douglass Square, Lower Roxbury (potential historic district) Located at the junction of Tremont, Harmond, and Cabot Streets, Frederick Douglass Square was dedicated on February 14, 1917, in honor of the centenary of the famous black abolitionist's birth. Here Douglass is said to have spoken to open air meetings about the plight of slaves in America. The area, centered on Greenwich, Warwick & Sussex Streets, includes brick row houses developed as working class housing by Robert Treat Paine between 1886 & 1890, and remains as an important, intact cluster of such charitable housing.

Moreland St. Historic District (roughly bounded by Kearsage Ave., Blue Hill Ave., Waverly St., Warren St.; National Register) is significant for its substantial inventory of distinguished architecture representing a range of the styles and residential building types prevailing in the Boston area from 1840 to the 1900's, for the evolution of its urban/suburban plan, as an important example of Boston's "streetcar suburb" development, and for its associations with the lives of persons of national and local importance, particularly General Joseph Warren and members of his family.

Dudley Station Historic District (centered on Dudley Station: along Washington and Roxbury Streets, Guild Row, Dudley Square, Dudley and Warren Streets). The area's copper clad elevated rail complex, brick commercial blocks, and apartment hotels reflect the late 19th - early 20th century prosperity of a major metropolitan Boston transportation/commercial node. Within the district are stylish, high quality buildings designed by major Boston architectural firms. Particularly significant are the architectural elements and engineering features of the Dudley Station Terminal's various components. In addition, the area contains buildings associated with individuals who figured prominently in late 19th - early 20th century Roxbury, Boston commerce, politics, and civic affairs.

Into Eliot Square (including 183-147 Roxbury St.; 13 to 25 Putnam, 32 to 70 Bartlett St., and the First Church). Included are building types from the mid-eighteenth through the nineteenth centuries. Particularly significant are the First Church (1804), a fine example of the Federal Meetinghouse style, and the Dillaway-Thomas House (1750), built as a rectory for the First Church and owned in the nineteenth century by prominent educator Charles Knapp Dillaway.

The Roxbury Highlands Historic District is significant for its decisive role in events surrounding the Revolutionary War; as an important example of Boston's "streetcar suburb" development from an early farming community to a fashionable nineteenth-century suburb and finally to a twentieth-century urban neighborhood; for its association with persons of local and national importance, including the Dudley family, John Eliot, Edward Everett Hale, William Lloyd Garrison, and Louis Prang; and for its full cross-section of nineteenth-century residential building types and styles.

The archaeological potential at all of the key sites - Dillaway House, Eustis St. area (Roxbury Canal), Fort Hill, Shirley-Eustis House - should be examined as part of the development of the heritage park. Interpretation of archaeological material should be included at each site as appropriate, and there should also be a major archaeological exhibit at the Eustis Street visitor center. The possibility of establishing a public/private curatorial facility at Eustis Street should also be explored in the planning stages.

Transportation & Parking

Once the Orange Line service of the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority is relocated to the South West Corridor, a project which is due to be completed in 1987, the principal transit link to the northwestern section of Roxbury will be via the Roxbury Crossing stop of that new service. An alternative surface transit system is also being planned to replace the present orange line service along the present route of the elevated. The Dudley Station area is expected to be served by this replacement service.

In order to connect both the Dillaway and Eustis Street visitor centers to rapid transit lines, as well as to enhance the continued economic livelihood of the Dudley Station area, service by some sort of surface vehicle between Roxbury Crossing and Dudley is imperative. Alternatives, including a loop using Melnea Cass Boulevard, Washington and Roxbury Streets, should be explored.

Visitor parking for the heritage park must be accomodated at both the Dillaway and Eustis Street visitor centers and, in smaller quantities, at Roxbury High Fort and Shirley Eustis House.

IV. Related Preservation Programs

As an outgrowth of its survey of Roxbury's architectural and historical resources, the Boston Landmarks Commission has identified properties which appear to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. It has also identified properties which could qualify for designation by the Boston Landmarks Commission in one of the four categories established in the Landmarks Commissions enabling statute. Listing in the Register and designation by the landmarks Commission are together referred to as "protective designation," meaning that, depending upon the circumstances, properties so listed or designated can be afforded a measure of protection from alteration or destruction by public of private parties.

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places, maintained by the U.S. Department of the Interior, is the nation's official list of important cultural resources. Listing on the National Register provides a limited degree of protection from federally-licensed or assisted projects which would have a negative impact on the property. It has no effect on strictly private actions involving listed properties, except through the provisions of the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981. State actions are also reviewed as properties listed on the National Register are also automatically included in the State Register of Historic Places.

John Eliot Square (including 183-147 Roxbury St.; 13 to 65 Putnam, 62 to 70 Bartlett St., and the First Church). Included are building types from the mid-eighteenth through the nineteenth centuries. Particularly significant are the First Church (1804), a fine example of the Federal Meetinghouse style, and the Dillaway-Thomas House (1750), built as a rectory for the First Church and owned in the nineteenth century by prominent educator Charles Knapp Dillaway.

The Roxbury Highlands Historic District is significant for its decisive role in events surrounding the Revolutionary War; as an important example of Boston's "streetcar suburb" development from an early farming community to a fashionable nineteenth-century suburb and finally to a twentieth-century urban neighborhood; for its association with persons of local and national importance, including the Dudley family, John Eliot, Edward Everett Hale, William Lloyd Garrison, and Louis Prang; and for its full cross-section of nineteenth-century residential building types and styles.

Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981:

Under the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981, significant incentives are established for the preservation of income producing properties listed on the National register or in local historic districts (such as can be designated by the Landmarks Commission) and certified by the Secretary of the Interior.

Specifically, the owner of a certified historic structure can deduct 25% of the cost of "qualified rehabilitation" expenses from income taxes owed. The 25% investment tax credit is part of a three tiered system of incentives aimed at encouraging rehabilitation of older structures. The process of certifying the historic quality of a property and the appropriateness of the rehabilitation work is administered by the Massachusetts Historic Commission on behalf of the Secretary of the Interior.

Boston Landmarks Commission:

The Boston Landmarks Commission was established i n 1975 by a special act of the legislature, in order to serve as a mechanism for the orderly preservation of the City's historic buildings and neighborhoods. Designation by the Commission has two purposes. First, it recognizes the designated property as an important part of the City's legacy. Second, it makes the property subject to a systematic design review process. Once designated, a property cannot be demolished or its exterior appearance substantially changed, without prior approval by the Commission.

Recommendations for Protective Designation in Roxbury:

A number of properties and areas, including John Eliot Square and the Charles Street A.M.E. Church, are already listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and others, such as the Moreland Street District, are currently in the process of nomination. For a review of the current recommendation for future designations refer to chart on page , and the accompanying map.

II. Preservation Issues & Needs

In the last two decades, the physical character of Roxbury has been altered substantially. This has occurred through forceful public action such as Urban Renewal, which cleared and rebuilt vast areas of lower Roxbury and Washington Park, as well as a combination of public and private neglect which saw private disinvestment lead to arson and demolition of important building stock-much of it a significant part of Roxbury's heritage.

Three key issues exist in terms of the preservation of Roxbury's remaining historic, architectural and archaeological resources:

- Protection of resources from deliberate or inadvertant destruction by public and private entities.
- Rehabilitation of existing building stock to extend the economic usefulness of these structures to the neighborhoods in which they are located.
- Encouragement of new development which is compatible with the historic resources and strengthens the viability of these resources by improving the economic health of the areas in which they are located.

In Roxbury, as in most of Boston's older neighborhoods, historic resources are not limited to a few, museum quality structures, but covers substantial enclaves of privately owned properties which represent a type and style of building, such as the working class housing of Frederick Douglas Square, or the more elaborate houses found in the Moreland and Highland Park sections. Because this is true, the techniques for achieving the protection and rehabilitation of these properties must include an array of community development mechanisms which address the complex needs and requirements of the properties and their owners. One of the devices which has been identified to help preserve Roxbury's special identity and character and promote the revitalization of parts of the community which are not thriving is the Roxbury Heritage State Park. Other techniques will be addressed elsewhere in this report.

III. The Roxbury Heritage State Park

Following proposals by city government and private non profit organizations, the state legislature approved, in the creation of a Heritage State Park in Roxbury and the authorization of $6 million to plan for, implement and set up a fund to administer the park for the benefit of the public at large and the community in which it is to be located. The Department of Environmental Management in the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs is charged with developing the plan for the park and has begun the planning process. The five main goals for the Roxbury Park, as for other heritage parks in the Commonwealth, are as follows:

- to preserve and enhance those unique combinations of natural and manmade features, found in the state's urban areas, that have played significant roles in state or regional history;
- to provide needed urban open and recreational areas;
- to coordinate with and integrate local, state, and federal funds and programs to provide maximum community revitalization benefits;
- to rely on and encourage local initiative and involvment in the planning and development of a Heritage State Park system.

The Boston Landmarks Commission, having recently completed a thorough survey of Roxbury with the assistance of the Museum of Afro-American History, the Roxbury Highlands Historical Society and two interns, has provided the Boston Redevelopment Authority with an evaluation of the historic resources of Roxbury and some preliminary concepts for the proposed park, including its layout, interpretive program and complementary activities to reinforce the parks' development potential. These concepts are for discussion purposes only, intended to foster dialogue about the scope, nature and intent of the proposed heritage park.

In addition to the five goals of the heritage park, the Landmarks Commission suggests that the following specific principles guide the Roxbury project:

- The park should reinforce the traditional activity centers in the Dudley Station area and in Eliot Square as a catalyst for economic revitalization in those districts.

- Public monies should be invested in those special buildings and sites for which private investment is unavailable, for whatever reason.

- Public monies should be allocated first to irreplaceable historic and natural resources rather than to routine public improvements and infrastructure.

- Substantial investment in core sites to be managed by DEM should be complemented by financial assistance to other important, privately held historic properties.

- Core sites should be selected not only for their uniqueness and vulnerability but for their relevance to the major themes to be developed in the interpretive program for the park.

- Interpretation of Roxbury's heritage should cover not only the core sites, but the less well known, dispersed sites and areas which contribute to an understanding of the community's rich past.

- Interpretation should achieve historic realism while at the same time building a strong, positive image of Roxbury's past and future.

- The design of facilities to be included in the park should balance the needs of regional visitors with the needs of adjacent neighborhoods.

A. Concept

The Roxbury Heritage State Park, like The Boston National Historic Park, draws its identity from a series of independent historic and cultural resources, each with its own significance. While some of these resources are clustered, as is the case of the Dillaway House, and the First Church in Roxbury, or the Eustis House Burial Ground and Fire Station, they are not generally contiguous. Planning for the park, therefore, must address the dual challenges of providing a geographical focus for the park while at the same time providing a conceptual framework for the many dispersed sites.

A number of alternatives exist for the physical structuring of the park, ranging from a single, dominant visitor center with a strong central exhibit depicting other resources, to a very dispersed park with interpretive exhibits at each of several sites. There are benefits and liabilities to each approach, which could be explored more extensively in the planning process.

Adhering to the previously outlined "guiding principles," the Boston Landmarks Commission and the Boston Redevelopment Authority propose a park which has a hierarchy of sites, as follows:

- A central visitor center and exhibit to be located at John Eliot Square in a restored Dillaway Thomas House and a new addition to the house.
- A second major exhibit in either the Nawn Factory or Eustis Street Fire Station in the Dudley Station area.
- Permanent kiosks or other passive devices to be installed at Roxbury High Fort (Highland Park), at Dudley Station, the Shirley Eustis House and several other sites.
- Informative plaques to be located at other sites which contribute to an understanding of Roxbury's heritage.
- In neighborhoods such as Moreland Street and Highland Park, individual date markers, if desired by the residents.

Under this scenario, public investment by the Commonwealth would be concentrated at the Dillaway House and a building in the Eustis Street area, with additional commitments required for sitework at the Roxbury High Fort and other open space areas to be identified. The Commonwealth would also be responsible for archaeology, for staffing the central exhibits, maintaining the grounds and interpretive devices at the High Fort, and subsidizing a brochure or pamphlets describing a self guided tour of other Roxbury sites.

Public investment in the form of low interest loans or grants for exterior restoration would be made available to owners of properties in the next "tier"-those which make a substantial contribution to an understanding of Roxbury's history and architecture. It is expected that funds for this work would be supplied by voluntary contributions of downtown developers and/or by Community Development Block Grant Funds. Donations of facade easements would be required as a condition of outright grants.

Potential Themes for the Heritage State Park

There are three primary themes which emerge from a review of the history of Roxbury: the town's decisive role in the Revolutionary War in Boston; the evolution of Roxbury as a "Street suburb," and the growth and prominence of Roxbury as the center of the Black community in Boston. A number of sub themes can also be identified which pertain to the development of institutions and services which reflect the changing needs and patterns of the people who have lived in the community. Also, the industrialization of Lower Roxbury and the Stoney Brook valley (now the Southwest Corridor area) should be interpreted as part of the park.

It is anticipated that each of the major themes would be addressed at the two primary visitor centers. However, at the Eustis Street site, the story of the Neck, and the development of Lower Roxbury as an area of mixed uses, with emphasis on industrial development, and the eventual emergence of the Dudley area as the principle shopping street of Black Boston would be emphasized. The archaeology of the Roxbury Canal and the sites of two late 18th century wooden houses would be interpreted as well.

At the Dillaway House, the very different story of residential development in Roxbury Highlands would be explored, from the earliest settlement in the 17th century through the present. Black history and culture would be stressed here and facilities provided for performances, lectures and the use of other media to capture the "people" side of history which does not reveal itself in structures and sites.

The secondary exhibits at Fort Hill, the Fellowes Atheneaum, Shirley Eustis House, Charles Street AME Church and Franklin Park would all consist of permanent, fixed exhibits such as horizontal panels or kiosks. They would emphasize the special sub-themes associated with each site as follows:

. Fort Hill - the Revolutionary fortifications, Olmsteds' re-design of the site, and the development of the Cochituate Water Works as an example of late 19th century public services.

. Fellowes Atheneaum - the growth of special social institutions to serve the needs of an increasingly urban society.

. Dudley Station - the role of transportation in development of the town and the pivotal role of the Dudley area to the Black community.

. Shirley-Eustis House - the special history of this recently restored mansion of a Colonial governor.

. Charles St. A.M.E. Church - the migration of Blacks from Beacon Hill to Roxbury through the South End - as seen by the moves of this congregation.

. Franklin Park - the importance of Olmsted's "Emerald Necklace."

To the extent possible, other sites in Roxbury would be referenced in the major exhibits and would also be described in brochures to allow self guided tours of other sites in Roxbury. Informative plaques should also be installed, with permission, at those other locations.

Relationship to Tourism

It is anticipated that the experience of visitors from outside of Roxbury will be that of a one day tour of the four most proximate sites on the Roxbury Heritage Trail. However the Shirley-Eustis House will be promoted as part of the park literature, and could also be part of a thematic, cross town trail linking the Blake and Clapp Houses in Dorchester, the Dillaway and Shirley-Eustis Houses in Roxbury and the Loring Greenough House in Jamaica Plain - a trail which could be marketed to regional visitors.

Local or neighborhood visitors to the park are more likely to make follow up visits, or simply come across in their travels the less well known historic sites which are scattered through the community. This experience of "discovering" the special attributes of a community can have the most beneficial effects in producing neighborhood self-awareness and pride.

Archaeology

The heritage park being proposed for Roxbury covers a part of the community which holds great potential for archaeological investigations and public interpretation. The area is one of a handful in the City which have been intensely settled for most of the period of European and Afro-American occupations. Because of its original proximity to the harbor and Back Bay, there is also the possibility of uncovering prehistoric remains. The depth of historic and prehistoric occupation alone make the area of the proposed park ideal for a wide variety of elements of a interpretive public program.

Proof is in the Puddingstone

The following buildings are all constructed of Roxbury Puddingstone, an indigenous conglomerate of a particularly rich and distinctive nature. All these buildings are itemized above. The theme of this material is a significant basis for interpretation that does not otherwise fall into the above groupings.

21 Dorr
Charles St. AME Church
34 Lambert
Church of God In Christ
Dimock Community Health Center (NE Hospital for Women)
Church of God In Christ
Joseph Warren House
Franklin Park